

SUBMISSION TO THE NUNAVUT WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT BOARD

March 2020

FOR

Information: X

Decision:

Issue: Department of Fisheries and Oceans Canada – Updates

Updates:

Staffing:

- Anika Bychok joined Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) Northern Operations in November 2019 as a Senior Fisheries Management Biologist.

Marine Mammals:

- 1) Narwhal:
 - In January 2020, DFO Science met with the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board (NWMB), Nunavut Tunngavik Inc. (NTI), Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife Board (QWB), and affected Hunters and Trappers Organizations (HTOs) in Winnipeg to discuss the design of the proposed 2020 East Baffin Island, Admiralty Inlet, and Eclipse Sound narwhal aerial survey.
 - Narwhal harvest tag returns and harvest numbers must be submitted by HTOs to DFO by the end of the harvest season, March 31, 2020. Harvest data will be reconciled prior to the 2020 harvest tag order and carry-overs will be calculated.
- 2) Walrus:
 - A Ministerial decision is expected by February 14, 2020 on the NWMB's approval of 76 walrus sport hunts for 2020.
 - DFO will not be submitting a Request for Decision to the NWMB in 2020 to establish Total Allowable Harvest (TAH) levels for walrus management units in Nunavut.
 - A Nunavut walrus working group meeting is being planned for March 13, 2020 in Iqaluit to discuss harvest reporting and community-based monitoring programs.
 - In partnership with the Hall Beach HTO, the community-based catch monitoring program for walrus in Hall Beach is expected to continue in 2020.
 - In partnership with the Aivitt HTO, the community-based catch monitoring program for walrus in Coral Harbour is launching in 2020.
 - DFO received few reports from the 2019 walrus sport hunt and is continuing to follow up with outfitters to receive this information required under the license conditions, and with the aim to improve reporting in the upcoming season.
- 3) Cumberland Sound Beluga:
 - A total of 41 beluga were reported harvested in Pangnirtung in the summer of 2019.
 - On May 14, 2019, a meeting was held in Pangnirtung with representatives from the

Pangnirtung HTO, NTI, NWMB, DFO, and QWB. DFO proposed that a Cumberland Sound Beluga Working Group be reconvened with co-management partners to review existing material, identify knowledge gaps, and determine a path forward to ensure sustainable management of this population. All co-management partners agreed to starting the working group.

- The working group met on October 9, 2019 and January 29, 2020. A community meeting was also held in Pangnirtung on January 29th. The next meeting is tentatively scheduled for June 2020.

4) Bowhead:

- DFO has received reporting information for 2019 bowhead harvests in Coral Harbour, Nauyasat, and Igloodik. DFO is still awaiting a final report from the 2019 harvest in Pont Inlet.
- DFO has been advised that the host communities for the 2020 bowhead harvest in the Qikiqtaaluk Region will be Qikiqtarjuaq and Hall Beach.

5) Harvest Reporting:

- DFO has requested harvest updates for beluga, walrus, bowhead, and narwhal from HTOs for the 2019 harvest season. Information provided by the HTOs will be used to finalize harvest data by the end of this season. Reports of total marine mammal hunting mortality (landed and lost) are essential to develop reliable advice on sustainable harvests.
- DFO urges continued reporting of unusual marine mammal occurrences and events e.g. beached carcass, ice entrapments, etc.
- Timely and accurate reporting is required under the Fisheries Act, Marine Mammal Regulations, and the Nunavut Agreement. It is strongly recommended that co-management organizations emphasize the importance of harvest reporting and monitoring.

Arctic Char:

1) Kivalliq Region:

- In February 2019, a workshop was held in Rankin Inlet to identify Arctic char research interests and commercial fisheries development priorities for each Kivalliq community. Participants of the meeting included representatives from all Kivalliq community HTOs, the Government of Nunavut, Kivalliq Wildlife Board, NWMB, Kivalliq Arctic Foods, NTI, DFO Resource Management, and DFO Science.
- The workshop identified a desire by the communities to resolve Arctic char diet from Kivalliq stocks. A community-based sampling program was proposed where samples would be collected from select waterbodies in each community. A total of 341 samples were collected and sent to DFO for analysis. Diet analyses are currently underway.
- The 2019 commercial harvest was around 6,500 lbs and involved only a few waterbodies. Given the low amount of harvest, Kivalliq Arctic Foods intends on buying Arctic char from Kitikmeot Foods Ltd. out of Cambridge Bay.
- A follow-up meeting is being planned for 2020 for DFO and all Kivalliq communities and stakeholders to discuss the progress achieved in 2019 and develop a collaborative plan moving forward.

- 2) Pangnirtung:
 - 22,426 kg of Arctic char was reported harvested during the 2019 summery fishery, with 20,607 kg coming from the exploratory waterbodies and 1,819 kg coming from the commercial waterbodies.
 - The Pangnirtung HTO advised DFO that they will begin issuing licences for the 2019-20 winter fishery as of January 21, 2020.

Greenland Halibut (Turbot):

- 1) Cumberland Sound Turbot Fishery:
 - The Pangnirtung HTO requested that the commercial licence for the 2020 Winter Turbot Fishery be issued on January 21, 2020.
 - DFO met with interested Pangnirtung Turbot fishers on January 28, 2020 to discuss logbooks and licence conditions, and to answer questions from fishers.
- 2) 2019 Offshore Fishery:
 - A total of 9,551 mt was harvested in Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization (NAFO) Division 0A.
 - A total of 4,944 mt was harvested in NAFO Division 0B by Nunavut licence holders.
- 3) Eastern Arctic Groundfish Stakeholders Advisory Committee:
 - The annual meeting of the Eastern Arctic Groundfish Stakeholders Advisory Committee (EAGSAC) will be held in Iqaluit on February 25-26, 2020.
- 4) Marine Stewardship Council Certification:
 - As of December 2019, the SA0 Turbot fishery obtained Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) sustainability certification.

Northern Shrimp:

- 1) For the Nunavut fishing industry in Shrimp Fishing Areas adjacent to Nunavut (2019/20):
 - A total of 2.1 mt was harvested in Davis Strait East.
 - A total of 1,619 mt was harvested in Davis Strait West.
 - No fishing occurred in Shrimp Fishing Area 1.
 - A total of 34 mt was harvested in the Eastern Assessment Zone.
 - A total of 4,556 mt was harvested in the Western Assessment Zone.
- 2) Northern Shrimp Advisory Committee:
 - The annual meeting of the Northern Shrimp Advisory Committee (NSAC) will take place in Halifax on March 4-5, 2020.

Prepared by: Iqaluit Office – Fisheries and Oceans Canada

Date: February 7, 2020